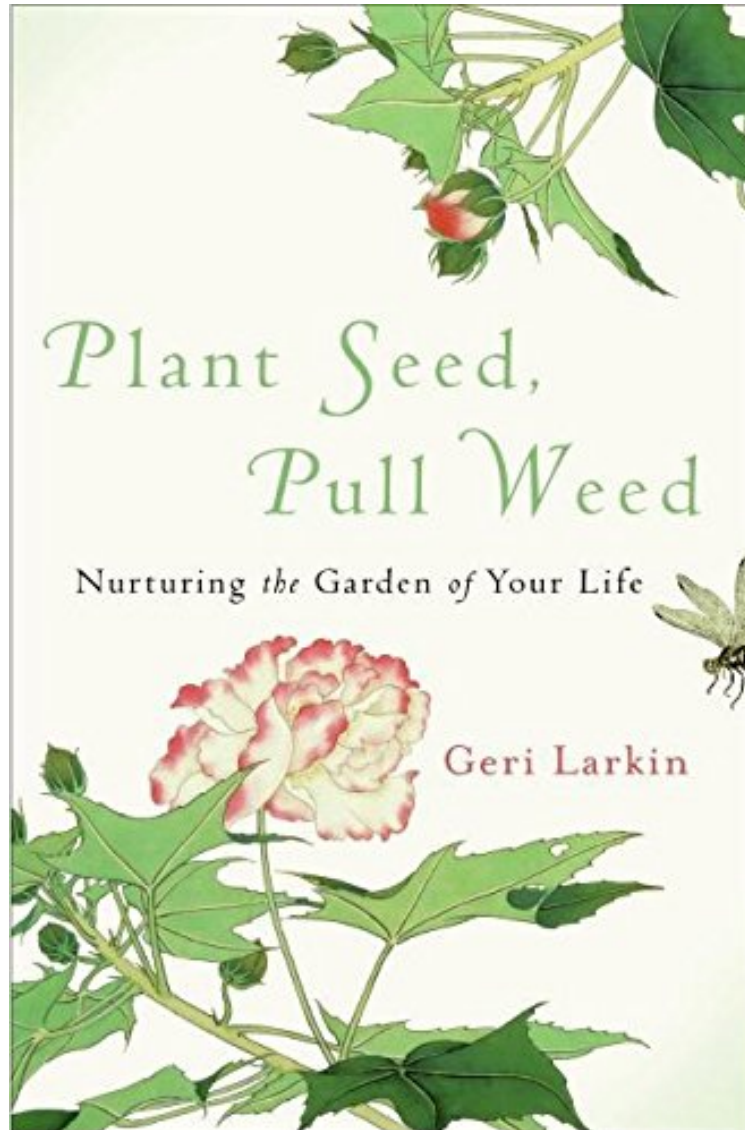


(Download) Plant Seed, Pull Weed: Nurturing the Garden of Your Life

## Plant Seed, Pull Weed: Nurturing the Garden of Your Life

*Geri Larkin*

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**Geri Larkin : Plant Seed, Pull Weed: Nurturing the Garden of Your Life** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Plant Seed, Pull Weed: Nurturing the Garden of Your Life:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Like gardening with the Dalai Lama's younger sisterBy Owl"Plant Seed, Pull Weed" is a garden of reading delight. Geri Larkin (whose books I've not read before) is warm, funny, wise, authentic, unpretentious, and inspiring. Reading "Plant Seed, Pull Weed" is like gardening with the Dalai Lama's younger sister, the one responsible for growing the community roses and veggies who is still cheerfully learning. There

are ten chapters in this slender book (192 double-spaced, wide-margin pages), each considering a quality valued in Buddhism and, for that matter, valued in many faiths spiritual practices:--casing the landscape: developing a clear intention--rolling up your sleeves: transcending hesitation--preparing the ground: seeding--the great fertilizer: generosity--planting like you mean it: enthusiasm--weeds and more weeds: taming our minds--tomatoes grow at their own speed: patience--weeding at the root: anger--the great harvest: joy--the whole world is our garden: vigilance Many metaphors could frame discussions of these virtues---cooking, child rearing, hiking the Appalachian Trail, iron mongery, sheep raising, archery and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. The virtues considered work well beautifully, in Larkin's hands, with gardening. Her writing combines stories about the famous, such as Bill Gates, and stories about the wonderful actions of people who have much much less; about legendary monks from centuries past; about her beloved Master under whom she studied for almost a decade; about her experiences as a landscaper's assistant and in a nursery; about guidance from the Gautama Buddha and from that magnificent gardener, philosopher, and writer, Henry Mitchell. Here's an example of Larkin's style: "When we start to notice our wild and crazy minds, we also start to see just how much our thinking determines our levels of---let's just call it what it is---sanity. When we know this, taming our thoughts becomes an important task. The first step to this taming is simply seeing what is going on up there in the first place. To pay attention, meditation helps. So does gardening. Especially gardening tasks where we really have to pay attention, like clearing blackberry bushes on a steep hill or weeding beside a foundation for red ants." I've fallen in love with Larkin's approach, content, and recipes (just a few are given). She also makes well-chosen suggestions for further reading that augment the gardening side of "Plant Seed, Pull Weed." The ten "nature- and gardening related books that convey the sweet feeling that a life filled with small doings can bring" include, for example, Dillard's "Pilgrim at Tinker Creek" and Nichol's lovely "Garden Open Today." Perhaps this seems like a small thing, but the dust jacket design of "Plant Seed, Pull Weed" are lovely. The jacket perhaps comes from a Japanese painting of an opening peony attended by a dragon fly, a visual image of the becoming the book may help us realize. Any negatives? Readers should expect about 30% gardening, mostly in the Seattle context, and about 70% Buddhist teachings. Maybe 40%/60% depending on the chapter. Readers seeking detailed guidance on plants, landscaping, gardening could enjoy "Plant Seed, Pull Weed" but need to look elsewhere for detail. And readers who are Zen masters may appreciate how skillfully the teachings are given yet need other sources for their nourishment. Also, as a minor reader alert, those who follow Don Marquis may remember Archie's exasperation at the unceasing "cheer up, cheer up, cheer up" of a katydid. "Groan once," says Archie, "or I will go mad." While "Plant Seed, Pull Weed" is not smarmy-cutesy-smiley, Larkin does not dwell on the world's griefs. She wisely may figure we each have our own weeds. are aware of the shadows in the grass, and seek affirmatively "to nurture the gardens of our lives" and the lives of others. Highly and enthusiastically recommended. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Diane I love Geris simple wisdom. This is one of the books I re-read often. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyed it even more the second time By Julie Lauren Franco I have read this book twice. Enjoyed it even more the second time.

Gardens have often been used as metaphors for spiritual nurturing and growth. Zen rock gardens, monastery rose gardens, even your grandmother's vegetable garden all have been described as places of refuge and reflection. Drawing on her experience working at Seattle's premier gardening center, Zen teacher Geri Larkin shows how the act of gardening can help you uncover your inner creativity, enthusiasm, vigilance, and joy. As your garden grows, so will your spirit. Larkin takes you through the steps of planning, planting, nurturing, and maintaining a garden while offering funny stories and inspiring lessons on what plants can teach us about our lives. As soothing as a bowl of homemade vegetable soup, Plant Seed, Pull Weed will entertain, charm, and inspire you to get your hands dirty and dig deep to cultivate your inner self.

From Publishers Weekly When Larkin was a college student, she took a job as a gardener something she says she knew absolutely nothing about. Now more plant savvy, the former management consultant turned Buddhist priest and author (The Chocolate Cake Sutra) uses gardening and Shantideva's The Way of the Bodhisattva to mine themes for her text. Her points are simple: see clearly, become more intentional, tame your mind, give generously and live with a wide-open heart. While advocating passion and enthusiasm, Larkin has learned the hard way that the best gardeners are patient. When we slow down, she writes, then chaos becomes beauty, lethargy energy, insolvable problems solvable. Her spare but pithy prose, common sense and laugh-out-loud humor emphasize her points. Other lessons also resonate: Learn to lose. Let go of mistakes. Forgive. Be kind. And don't worry, for anxiety will block your joy. Larkin is at her best when she shares personal experiences and insights, rather than stories about others, and the few recipes seem random. Although Larkin's book is clearly aimed at Buddhists, at its heart is a lesson about staying awake and paying attention to life, which is good advice for readers of any religious stripe. Readers will find Larkin's central promise We can be happy. Right here. Right now difficult to resist. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. With spare but pithy prose, common sense and laugh-out-loud humor, readers will find Larkin's central promise We can be happy. Right here. Right now difficult to resist. (Publishers Weekly) What a joy

to find spiritual writing so deeply rooted in the life of the earth. If the Buddha were alive today, Geri Larkin would be his gardener. (Clark Strand, author of *Meditation Without Gurus: A Guide to the Heart of Practice*) Both edifying and entertaining. (Spirituality Practice) Larkin takes readers into her vegetable and flower garden to teach them a few lessons about what our minds--and spirits--need to thrive. (Body Soul) *Plant Seed, Pull Weed* should find a receptive audience in this part of the world [the Pacific Northwest], where there are garden centers galore and any number of people trying to live a calmer, more centered life. (The Oregonian) Life as gardening is hardly an original metaphor...but Larkin breathes fresh life into it with anecdotes, insights, and enjoyable prose. Her focus on present-moment awareness and being as wise and compassionate as we can be, right where we are will resonate with all readers. (Shambhala Sun)...you'll not only grow amazing vegetables...you'll gain some Buddhist insight along the way. (Eugene Weekly) About the Author Geri Larkin gave up a successful career as a management consultant to become a Buddhist teacher. A practicing Buddhist since 1988, she completed seminary and was ordained in 1995. Four years later, she decided to start a Zen meditation center in the heart of inner-city Detroit. She is the author of *Stumbling Toward Enlightenment*, *Building a Business the Buddhist Way*, *Tap Dancing in Zen*, *First You Shave Your Head*, and *The Still Point Dhammapada*.